Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

MENOPAUSAL HORMONE THERAPY (MHT) - tablets

What does it do?

As you go through menopause, you produce less of the hormone oestrogen. MHT replaces this hormone. MHT tablets contain either only oestrogen, or both oestrogen and progestogen. Oestrogen treats symptoms of menopause and helps prevent weak bones (osteoporosis). Progestogen protects the lining of your uterus (womb) and reduces your chance of endometrial cancer. If you have had a hysterectomy (your uterus has been removed) then you only need to take oestrogen.

For more information see the Australasian Menopause Society.

Before you start

- Women taking MHT may have a small increased chance of breast cancer, blood clots, and stroke. Tell your doctor if you, or someone in your family, has ever had any of these problems.
- For most women, there is no increased chance of heart attacks. There may be a small increased chance if you are older than 60, or it has been over 10 years since menopause. Tell your doctor if you, or someone in your family, has ever had heart problems.

How should you take it?

Take MHT regularly as directed with a glass of water. You can take it with or without food.

What if you forget a dose?

If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort) or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Symptoms of a blood clot including: sudden shortness of breath, swelling or pain in one leg Symptoms of a stroke including: sudden weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side, face drooping, sudden changes in vision or speech, sudden loss of balance	Tell your doctor immediately
Unexpected vaginal bleeding	Tell your doctor
Headache Mood changes Sore or enlarged breasts Vaginal itch/discharge Bloating, stomach upset, stomach cramps	Tell your doctor if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- MHT does not protect against pregnancy. You can still get pregnant up to 1 year after your last period if you are older than 50, or up to 2 years if you are under 50. Talk to your doctor about contraception options.
- MHT is also known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT).